

REMARKS

Claims 12-14, 16, 18, and 30-32 are currently pending in the present application, with Claims 28 and 29 being additionally canceled, Claims 12-14 and 16 being amended, and new Claims 30-32 being added. Reconsideration and reexamination of the claims are respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejected Claims 28 and 29 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. This rejection is moot in view of the canceled claims.

The Examiner rejected Claims 12-14, 16, 18, 28, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. 102(a, e) as being anticipated by Toshima et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,613,692). The Examiner further rejected Claims 12-14, 16, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kamikawa et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,940,985). These rejections are respectfully traversed with respect to the pending and amended claims.

As previously communicated, the present invention as claimed is generally directed to methods for processing substrates. Applicants have amended Claim 12 to specify that the solvent vapor is generated in the vapor generator while the fluid communication between the generator and the processing container is disconnected, and that the vapor is introduced to the container only after the pressure of the solvent vapor exceeds the pressure of the processing container. As explained at pp. 38-39 of the present application, this additional step ensures a quick initiation of the substrate processing with a steady flow of a large volume of vapor gas; this in turn allows for processing to be performed using ozone gas within a high temperature environment (*see* p. 38, line 27 to p. 39, line 3 of the present application).

Neither Toshima nor Kamikawa contain any disclosure or suggestion of generating step, the comparing step, or the supplying step as recited in the amended claim. Rather, Toshima merely discloses a procedure for ozone/steam resist-removing process, while Kamikawa is directed to a drying process. Neither reference discuss or suggest monitoring and comparing pressures between the solvent vapor and the processing chamber. If the Examiner maintains this rejection, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner provide a more detailed citations to the specific sections of the references in which each and every element of the amended claims are disclosed.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are not anticipated by, nor obvious in view of, either Toshima or Kamikawa.

New Claims 30-32 have been added to recite further aspects of the present invention, and are respectfully submitted as in condition for allowance.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is requested to pass this application to issue.

In the unlikely event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, Applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1952** referencing Docket No. 199372003910.

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Respectfully submitted,

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